

Crediting Smoothies in the Summer Food Service Program

This guidance applies to meals and snacks served in the U.S. Department of Agriculture's (USDA) Summer Food Service Program (SFSP). For information on the SFSP meal patterns and components, refer to Connecticut State Department of Education's (CSDE) resources, [Requirements for the Vegetables/Fruits Component of the SFSP Meal Patterns](#), [Requirements for the Milk Component of the SFSP Meal Patterns](#), and [Requirements for the Meat/Meat Alternates Component of the SFSP Meal Patterns](#); and visit the "SFSP Meal Patterns" and "Vegetables/Fruits Component for the SFSP" sections of the CSDE's SFSP webpage.



Smoothie ingredients that credit toward the SFSP meal patterns include full-strength fruit or vegetable juice, pureed fruits, and pureed vegetables (vegetables/fruits component); milk (milk component); and yogurt (meat/meat alternates component). Creditable ingredients in smoothies must provide at least the minimum creditable amount to credit toward the SFSP meal patterns. The minimum creditable amounts are $\frac{1}{8}$ cup for the vegetables/fruits component; $\frac{1}{4}$ cup for the milk component (applies to smoothies only); and $\frac{1}{8}$ cup for yogurt.

If a smoothie contains less than the full serving of a component, the menu must include an additional food from that component to meet the full requirement.

SFSP sponsors must maintain appropriate documentation to indicate the crediting information for smoothies. For example, to credit a strawberry smoothie as $\frac{1}{2}$ cup of the vegetables/fruits component and 1 ounce of the meat/meat alternates component, the documentation must indicate that the serving contains $\frac{1}{2}$ cup of pureed strawberries and $\frac{1}{2}$ cup of yogurt.

Required Crediting Documentation

To credit smoothies made from scratch, SFSP sponsors must have a recipe that documents the amount of meat or meat alternate per serving. The USDA encourages SFSP sponsors to use standardized recipes whenever possible. For more information, refer to the CSDE's [Standardized Recipe Form for the SFSP](#) and visit the "Standardized Recipes" section of the CSDE's SFSP webpage.



To credit commercial smoothies, SFSP sponsors must obtain a product formulation statement (PFS) or Child Nutrition (CN) label (if available). For information on CN labels and PFS forms, refer to CSDE's resources, [Child Nutrition \(CN\) Labeling Program](#), [Product Formulation Statements](#) and [Accepting Processed Product Documentation in the SFSP](#), and the USDA's [PFS forms for the SFSP](#) and

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Tips for Evaluating a Manufacturer's Product Formulation Statement. For additional guidance on documentation for commercial products, visit the “[Crediting Commercial Processed Products](#)” section of the CSDE’s SFSP webpage.

Recommended Daily Limit for Smoothies

The USDA recommends limiting smoothies to one SFSP meal or snack per day. For example, if a smoothie is served at breakfast, the SFSP menus for lunch, supper, and snack should not include a smoothie.

Crediting Fruits and Vegetables in Smoothies

Pureed fruits and vegetables in smoothies credit only as juice toward the vegetables/fruits component. Crediting is based on the volume (cups) of pureed fruits and vegetables per serving. For example, a smoothie that contains ½ cup of pureed strawberries credits as ½ cup of fruit juice. SFSP sponsors must document the amount of pureed fruits and vegetables per serving (refer to “[Required Crediting Documentation](#)” in this document).

- **Juice limit for lunch and supper:** The SFSP lunch and supper meal pattern requires at least ¾ cup (combined total) of two *different* kinds of vegetables and/or fruits. Juice (including pureed fruits and vegetables in smoothies) cannot credit for more than half of the vegetables/fruits component. SFSP lunch and supper menus cannot offer a smoothie and juice as the only two servings of fruits and vegetables because both credit as juice. For example, the lunch menu cannot offer a strawberry smoothie as the fruits component and tomato juice as the vegetables component. For more information, refer to CSDE’s resource, [Crediting Juice in the SFSP](#).

At least one of the two required servings of the vegetables/fruits component at lunch or supper must be a *whole fruit or vegetable*, i.e., fresh, frozen, canned, or dried. For example, a lunch menu that includes a peach smoothie made with ½ cup of pureed fruit (credits as juice) must also include at least ½ cup of vegetables or a different type of whole fruit (not peaches). For more information, refer to CSDE’s resource, [Requirements for the Vegetables/Fruits Component of the SFSP Meal Patterns](#).



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- **Breakfast:** The SFSP breakfast meal pattern requires a serving of vegetables, fruits, or both. Smoothies that contain $\frac{1}{2}$ cup of juice (including pureed fruits and vegetables) may credit as the entire vegetables/fruits component at breakfast. For example, a serving of smoothie that contains $\frac{1}{2}$ cup of pureed mangoes and carrots credits as the full vegetables/fruits component.
- **Snack:** The SFSP snack meal pattern requires two different components. Smoothies that contain $\frac{3}{4}$ cup of juice (including pureed fruits and vegetables) may credit as the entire vegetables/fruits component at snack. Smoothies containing juice and milk may credit as either juice or milk, but not both in the same snack. The snack menu cannot include juice (including pureed fruits and vegetables in smoothies) when milk is the only other snack component.

The examples below illustrate these requirements. The required snack servings are 1 cup of milk, 1 ounce of meat/meat alternates, $\frac{3}{4}$ cup of vegetables/fruits, and 1 serving of grains.

- **Example 1:** A smoothie recipe contains $\frac{3}{4}$ cup of pureed fruit (credits as fruit juice) and 1 cup of unflavored low-fat milk per serving. The menu planner may choose to credit the smoothie as either the full vegetables/fruits component or the full milk component, but not both in the same snack. To be reimbursable, the snack must include the full serving of a second component that is not juice, vegetables/fruits, or milk. The second component could be meat/meat alternates or grains/breads. For example, the snack menu could include a 2-ounce whole-grain corn muffin (grains component) as the second component.
- **Example 2:** A smoothie recipe contains $\frac{3}{4}$ cup of pureed fruit (credits as fruit juice) and $\frac{1}{2}$ cup of unflavored low-fat milk per serving. The pureed fruit provides the full fruits component. However, the milk cannot credit as the full milk component because it is less than 1 cup. To be reimbursable, the snack must include the full serving of a second component that is not juice, vegetables/fruits, or milk. The second component could be meat/meat alternates or grains/breads. For example, the snack menu could include 1 ounce of cheese cubes (meat/meat alternates component) as the second component.



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Crediting Milk in Smoothies

Milk in smoothies credits as the milk component based on the amount per serving. For example, a smoothie that contains $\frac{1}{2}$ cup of milk credits as $\frac{1}{2}$ cup of the milk component. SFSP sponsors must document the amount of milk per serving (refer to “[Required Crediting Documentation](#)” in this document).

- **Allowable types of milk:** Allowable types of milk for the SFSP include unflavored or flavored pasteurized whole milk, reduced-fat milk, low-fat milk, fat-free milk, buttermilk, lactose-reduced milk, and acidophilus milk. For information on the crediting requirements for milk, refer to CSDE’s resource, *Requirements for the Milk Component of the SFSP Meal Patterns*.



- **Minimum creditable amount:** The minimum creditable amount of milk in a smoothie is $\frac{1}{4}$ cup. This crediting applies only to smoothies. SFSP sponsors must have a recipe or PFS to document the type and amount of milk per serving (refer to “[Required Crediting Documentation](#)” in this document).

Crediting Yogurt in Smoothies

Yogurt in smoothies credits as the meat/meat alternates component based on the amount in the serving. A $\frac{1}{2}$ -cup serving of yogurt credits as 1 ounce of the meat/meat alternates component. SFSP sponsors must document the amount of yogurt per serving (refer to “[Required Crediting Documentation](#)” in this document). For information on the crediting requirements for yogurt, refer to CSDE’s resource, *Crediting Yogurt in the SFSP*.

- **Milk substitution:** The addition of yogurt to a smoothie is not a substitution for fluid milk. Fluid milk must be offered in all breakfasts, lunches, and suppers to meet the milk component requirement of the SFSP meal patterns.
- **Soy yogurt:** Soy yogurt does not credit in SFSP meals and snacks.

Additional Ingredients

Smoothies may include additional ingredients to improve flavor and consistency, such as oatmeal and peanut butter. These ingredients do not credit toward the SFSP meal patterns.

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Crediting Example

Table 1 shows how a smoothie made with blueberry puree, low-fat yogurt, fat-free milk, and oatmeal could credit toward the SFSP meal patterns.

Table 1. Meal pattern contribution of a blueberry smoothie recipe	
Ingredient	Meal pattern contribution ¹
Frozen blueberry puree, ½ cup	½ cup of fruit juice (vegetables/fruits component) ²
Low-fat yogurt, ½ cup	1 ounce of meat/meat alternates ³
Low-fat milk, 4 fluid ounces	4 fluid ounces of milk ³
Oatmeal, 2 tablespoons	None (noncreditable in smoothies)

¹ If a creditable ingredient does not provide the full meal pattern component (minimum amount), the menu must include additional servings of that component to meet the SFSP meal patterns.

² The menu planner must count pureed fruits and vegetables in smoothies toward the juice limit at lunch and supper. For more information, refer to CSDE's resource, [Crediting Juice in the SFSP](#).

³ The minimum creditable amount of milk in a smoothie is ¼ cup. If the smoothie contains less than 1 cup of milk per serving, the menu must include the additional amount of milk to provide the full milk component.



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Commercial Products

Commercial smoothies credit the same as smoothies made on site. Product formulation and labeling can vary greatly because commercial smoothies do not have a federal standard of identity. To credit commercial smoothies in SFSP meals and snacks, SFSP sponsors must obtain a PFS (or CN label, if available) stating the amount of all creditable ingredients per serving, such as pureed fruits and vegetables, juice, yogurt, and milk (refer to “[Required Crediting Documentation](#)” in this document).



- **Crediting pureed vegetables/fruits:** Commercial smoothies made with pureed fruits/vegetables credit only as juice toward the fruits component or vegetables component. Crediting is based on the volume of fruits/vegetables after pureeing and before freezing. The product label must include a statement regarding the “percent juice content,” which is required by the Food and Drug Administration (FDA) for beverages made with fruit/vegetable juice or puree. For example, an 8-fluid ounce smoothie made from fruit puree labeled with “contains 50% juice” credits as 4 fluid ounces ($\frac{1}{2}$ cup) of juice. SFSP sponsors may need to obtain a PFS from the manufacturer to document the amount of pureed fruit in the product.

Concentrated fruit puree and concentrated juice are added sugars. They do not credit in smoothies, unless they are reconstituted to full-strength fruit puree or full-strength juice.

- **Crediting milk:** Milk credits as the milk component when used as an ingredient in commercial smoothies. The product documentation must attest that commercial mixes with milk are made using ingredients that meet federal, state, and local definitions for fluid milk.
- **Crediting yogurt:** Yogurt credits as the meat/meat alternates component when used as an ingredient in commercial smoothies. The product documentation must attest that commercial mixes with yogurt are made in compliance with the federal definition for yogurt.

The addition of yogurt to a smoothie is not a substitution for fluid milk in the SFSP meal patterns. Fluid milk must be offered in all breakfasts, lunches, and suppers to meet the milk component requirement.

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- **Limit for crediting amount:** The total creditable amount in a smoothie cannot exceed the volume served. For example, ½ cup of a commercial smoothie cannot credit as 1 cup of juice.
- **Noncreditable commercial smoothies:** Probiotic dairy drinks, drinkable yogurt, and yogurt drinks are not smoothies, and do not credit in the preschool meal patterns. Commercial smoothies that contain dietary supplements (such as whey protein powder) or herbal supplements (such as ginkgo biloba, ginseng, and echinacea) do not credit in the preschool meal patterns.

SFSP sponsors must refer to product's PFS to check for 1) volumes of pureed fruits and vegetables prior to freezing; and 2) documentation that milk and yogurt (if included) meet the meal pattern requirements (refer to "[Required Crediting Documentation](#)" in this document).

Commercial smoothies cannot credit in SFSP meals and snacks without a PFS (or a CN label for commercial smoothies that contain yogurt). SFSP sponsors must review PFS forms for accuracy.



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Resources

Accepting Processed Product Documentation in the SFSP (CSDE):

https://portal.ct.gov/-/media/SDE/Nutrition/SFSP/CreditingSFSP/Accepting_Processed_Product_Documentation_SFSP.pdf

Child Nutrition (CN) Labeling Program (CSDE):

https://portal.ct.gov/-/media/SDE/Nutrition/NSLP/Crediting/CN_Labeling_Program.pdf

Crediting Foods in the SFSP (“Documents/Forms” section of CSDE’s SFSP webpage):

<https://portal.ct.gov/SDE/Nutrition/Summer-Food-Service-Program/Documents>

Crediting Juice in the SFSP (CSDE):

https://portal.ct.gov/-/media/SDE/Nutrition/SFSP/CreditingSFSP/Credit_Juice_SFSP.pdf

Crediting Yogurt in the SFSP (CSDE):

https://portal.ct.gov/-/media/SDE/Nutrition/SFSP/CreditingSFSP/Credit_Yogurt_SFSP.pdf

Food Buying Guide for Child Nutrition Programs (USDA):

<https://www.fns.usda.gov/tn/food-buying-guide-for-child-nutrition-programs>

Meal Patterns for the SFSP (CSDE’s SFSP webpage):

<https://portal.ct.gov/SDE/Nutrition/Summer-Food-Service-Program#MealPatterns>

Menu Planning for the SFSP (CSDE’s SFSP webpage):

<https://portal.ct.gov/SDE/Nutrition/Summer-Food-Service-Program#MenuPlanning>

Milk Component for the SFSP (“Documents/Forms” section of CSDE’s SFSP webpage):

<https://portal.ct.gov/SDE/Nutrition/Summer-Food-Service-Program/Documents#Milk>

Nutrition Guide: Summer Food Service Program (USDA):

https://fns-prod.azureedge.net/sites/default/files/resource-files/USDA_SFSP_NutritionGuide.pdf

Product Formulation Statement (Product Analysis) for Meat/Meat Alternate (M/MA) Products in Child Nutrition Programs (USDA):

https://www.fns.usda.gov/sites/default/files/resource-files/PFS_Meats-Meat_Alternates_Fillable_508.pdf

Product Formulation Statement for Documenting Vegetables and Fruits in the Child and Adult Care Food Program, Summer Food Service Program, and NSLP Afterschool Snacks (USDA):

https://fns-prod.azureedge.net/sites/default/files/resource-files/PFS_Document_Total_Veg_Fruits.pdf

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Product Formulation Statement for Documenting Vegetables and Fruits in the Child and Adult Care Food Program, Summer Food Service Program, and NSLP Afterschool Snacks (USDA):

https://www.fns.usda.gov/sites/default/files/resource-files/PFS_Total_Veg_Fruits_Fillable_508.pdf

Product Formulation Statements (CSDE):

https://portal.ct.gov/-/media/SDE/Nutrition/NSLP/Crediting/Product_Formulation_Statements.pdf

Requirements for the Milk Component of the SFSP Meal Patterns (CSDE):

https://portal.ct.gov/-/media/SDE/Nutrition/SFSP/CreditingSFSP/Component_Milk_SFSP.pdf

Requirements for the Vegetables/Fruits Component of the SFSP Meal Patterns (CSDE):

https://portal.ct.gov/-/media/SDE/Nutrition/SFSP/CreditingSFSP/Component_Vegetables_Fruits_SFSP.pdf

Standardized Recipe Form for the SFSP (CSDE):

https://portal.ct.gov/-/media/SDE/Nutrition/SFSP/CreditingSFSP/Standardized_Recipe_Form_SFSP.docx

Standardized Recipes (“Documents/Forms” section of CSDE’s SFSP webpage):

<https://portal.ct.gov/SDE/Nutrition/Summer-Food-Service-Program/Documents#StandardizedRecipes>

Tips for Evaluating a Manufacturer’s Product Formulation Statement (USDA):

<https://fns-prod.azureedge.net/sites/default/files/resource-files/manufacturerPFStipsheet.pdf>

USDA Memo SP 40-2019, CACFP 17-2019 and SFSP 17-2019: Smoothies Offered in the Child Nutrition Programs:

<https://www.fns.usda.gov/school-meals/smoothies-offered-child-nutrition-programs>

Vegetables/Fruits Component for the SFSP (CSDE webpage):

<https://portal.ct.gov/SDE/Nutrition/Summer-Food-Service-Program/Documents#VegetablesFruits>

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For more information, visit the [SFSP Meal Patterns](#) and [Crediting Foods in the SFSP](#) sections of the CSDE's SFSP webpage, or contact the [Summer Meals staff](#) in the CSDE's Bureau of Health/Nutrition, Family Services and Adult Education, 450 Columbus Boulevard, Suite 504, Hartford, CT 06103-1841.

This document is available at https://portal.ct.gov/-/media/SDE/Nutrition/SFSP/CreditingSFSP/Credit_Smoothies_SFSP.pdf.

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Office of the Assistant Secretary for Civil Rights
1400 Independence Avenue, SW
Washington, D.C. 20250-9410;
- (2) fax: (202) 690-7442; or
- (3) email: program.intake@usda.gov.

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